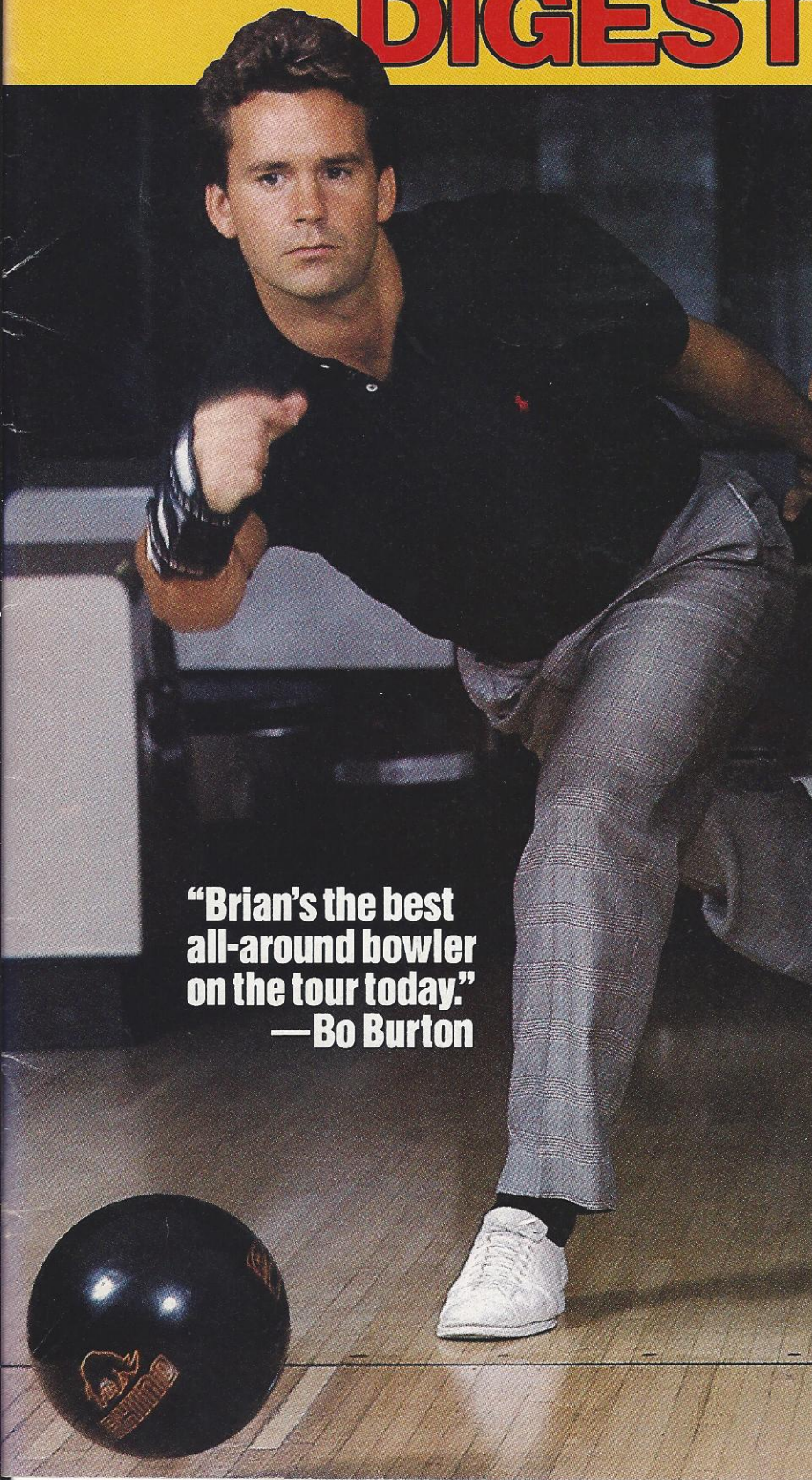


Carmen Salvino • Firestone Wrap-Up • Instruction: Chris Warren

# BOWLING

July/August 1990

## DIGEST



# BRIAN VOSS

## On the Record

“

My looks aren't a distraction. Publicity is publicity.

I wasn't born knowing everything I've learned.

I'd like to think I'm different from most other pro bowlers.

”

“Brian's the best all-around bowler on the tour today.”  
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## Bill Spigner's Bowling Clinic

■ I am 21 years old, and my average is about 195. I bowl two nights a week and in two leagues. My problem is my timing—I go into peaks and valleys. What I mean is, when I'm rolling the 240 and 250 games my timing is great, and it stays that way until I bowl a 260 or 270 and a 700 series. After accomplishing those feats, though, I go into a bad slump, my timing is way off, and I can't seem to get it back again. What should I do?

A long time ago I heard two quotes that relate to slumps in bowling. I heard the first one from all-time great Carmen Salvino: "You only bowl good between slumps." This makes light of slumps, but nevertheless it's true. The other quote I heard from PBA Hall-of-Famer Don Johnson: "Slumps are started by something physical and prolonged by something mental."

The biggest key to timing is starting right; if your ball placement or pushaway is correct, your timing falls into place. The important thing is to know where your ball should be at the completion of your key step (the first step in a four-step approach and the second step in a five-step approach). The best place for your ball to be on your key step is determined by the height of your swing.

For example, if you have a short, flat swing, your ball should be about chest high at the completion of your key step. On the opposite end, if you have a very high swing, your ball should be at your knees at the completion of your key step. These are just examples of the two ends of the spectrum on ball placement position in relation to your swing height; just use them as a rule of thumb.

Two factors that can change ball placement position are the speed and the length of your steps. For example, if you have a short, flat swing and very fast feet, your ball placement could be below waist height at the completion of your key step. To help you evaluate the best position for your ball placement, ask yourself these questions: How high is my backswing? Where is my ball at the completion of my key step? How fast are my feet moving? Once you're armed with the answers to these questions, you'll be able to make a more educated decision to help you correct your timing problem.

Concentration and knowledge of your game are the two keys to help you fight out of a slump. Sometimes when you're rolling big scores you take it for granted that they'll keep coming. Then you start thinking about the high scores instead of concentrating on what produces them: making your shot consistently, watching your ball reaction, and playing the lanes correctly.

■ I am a 63-year-old female senior bowler. I bowl in three leagues a week and throw a straight ball. I was using a Brunswick Crown Jewel and carrying a 170 average, but 18 months ago I switched to a Lady Ebonite ball and lost 15 pins off my average. If memory serves me right, it was about this time that the lane dressing was changed. What would be the difference in the two balls to make me drop my average like this, and how much would be the fault of the lane dressing?

I'm going to assume the lane condition was changed from long oil to short oil. If so, the difference between your two balls is significant. The Crown Jewel is a hard plastic ball, while the Lady Ebonite is a medium-soft urethane ball.

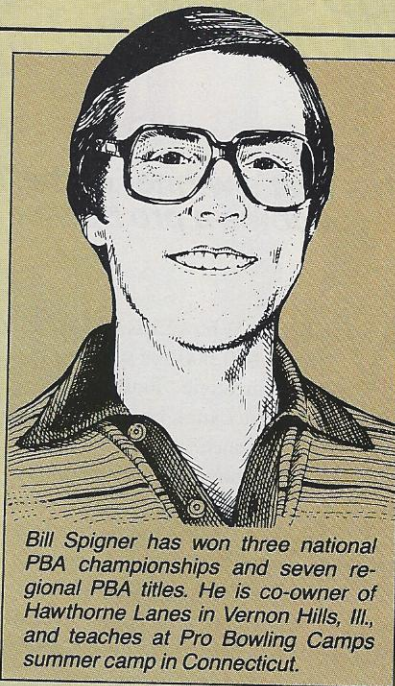
Your Lady Ebonite will grip the lane sooner than your Crown Jewel, and under your conditions it may lose some of its hitting power. With your bowling center going to short oil and you changing to a softer ball, your ball could be going into a roll too soon, which will actually slow it down. With less speed, your ball will not move the pins around as well.

The drilling of your new ball also might be different. With the success that you had with your Crown Jewel, make sure that the new ball is drilled with the same measurements as the old one.

■ I noticed on the winter tour that a lot of players were playing the deep inside line. Why is that? I always thought that if you played an outside line your entrance to the pocket will have more drive. Can you tell me what kinds of adjustments the pros make to keep from leaving 5- and 10-pins and to have less deflection?

You're right about most bowlers getting a better entry angle into the pocket when playing the outside line. But *how* the lanes are oiled determines the best place to play the lanes, and it also determines which type of player will be the most dominant. The PBA has its own lane maintenance people who oil the lanes. They change how they oil the lanes periodically to give all the players a fair chance at making a living.

When the shot was deep inside this past winter the dominant players rolled very powerful balls with a lot of side roll and revolutions, which helped them produce a strong moving ball in the back end. Often the players who dominate when the shot is deep inside don't fare as well when the shot is outside, because their ball has too much hook. Usually when the shot is inside, the oil is long and the outside part of the lane (the first 10 boards on each side) has more oil than the middle of the lane. If you tried to



*Bill Spigner has won three national PBA championships and seven regional PBA titles. He is co-owner of Hawthorne Lanes in Vernon Hills, Ill., and teaches at Pro Bowling Camps summer camp in Connecticut.*

play the outside line on this type of condition, your ball would have a hard time hooking back to the pocket. Because of this, the players play inside, where they are closer to the pocket and they don't have to get the ball to hook back a lot to reach the pocket.

But the key to scoring well when playing inside is being able to get the ball to finish well—to carry the pocket hits. A ball rolling end over end is not effective from deep inside, but it would be a good rolling ball from the outside line when the lanes are playable from there.

■ How can I find someone in my area (a pro) who can help me with my game and tell me what kind of ball I should be using?

The best place to look for pro shops is in the yellow pages under "bowling." These shops specialize in bowling only; possibly they'll be run by a PBA member or a top amateur who can help you with your equipment. Ask them if they give lessons or who they would recommend to go to for help.

Another approach would be to ask the employees or the better bowlers at your local center. Also check out your local bowling newspaper for ads from the top pro shops in your area. And finally, check out the top leagues in your area; ask the players about the top pro shops. ●

*Bill Spigner welcomes questions from readers and will answer as many as possible in this column. Mail your questions to: Bill Spigner, Bowling Digest, 990 Grove Street, Evanston, IL 60201.*